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The Urban District of Kirkham



Annual Health Report

for the Year 1955

Medical Officer of Health :

C. ROBERTSON WILSON, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.(Edin.).

Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector :

E. RIDDIOUGH, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A., A.M.I.San.E., L.I.O.B.



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HEALTH COMMITTEE

Councillor Mrs. M. Carr (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs. D. G. M. Sanderson
Councillor T. Ward, J.P., C.C. Councillor R. Lavelle
Councillor J. Whiteside Councillor T. A. Ruxton
Councillor J. Lawler Councillor H. Jones
Councillor J. Whiteside (Woodlands)

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health:
C. ROBERTSON WILSON, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (Edin.)

Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector:
E. RIDDIOUGH, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A., A.M.I.San.E., L.I.O.B.

Clerk: N. SWIFT, A.C.C.S.

Annual Health Report

of the

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR 1955

To the Chairman and Members of the Kirkham
Urban District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1955.

There must first be reported with deep regret the retirement in May of Dr. A. Dodd owing to continued ill health, and his death in September. He had been Medical Officer of Health for five years.

During the early months of the year the District had a series of cases of Scarlet Fever. Visiting of homes and schools affected and swabbing of any who had had sore throats revealed a number of other people carrying Haemolytic Streptococci. Isolation and treatment of these undoubtedly prevented a more widespread outbreak.

During the same period there were thirty-three cases of Sonne Dysentery, which involved the Health Department in much home visitation for control and collection of specimens. This outbreak was connected with larger and concurrent ones in more populous areas adjacent.

1955 was a Measles year. Eighty-six cases occurred in the district. These were mostly of an uncomplicated type, but the outbreak was spaced over a long period, extending well into the summer months.

It is satisfactory to note that this year both the Maternal and Infantile mortality rates were Nil. Both the Birth rate and the Death rate were lower than those for 1954.

In conclusion I would thank the Members of the Health Committee for their co-operation and Mr. Riddiough and Mr. Swift for their ever willing and cheerful assistance in the work of the Health Department.

Yours faithfully,

C. ROBERTSON WILSON.

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area (in acres)	940
Home Population	6,460
(At the 1931 census the population was 4,031, whilst in 1949 the civilian population was estimated to be 4,710. The home population in 1954 was 6,430).	
Number of inhabited houses at 31-12-55	1,448
Rateable value at 31-12-55	£33,100
Amount produced by a penny rate	£134

VITAL STATISTICS

Births.—58 births (23 males and 35 females) were registered during the year. The birth rate of 11.8 per 1,000 compared with a rate of 18.1 per 1,000 in 1954.

Stillbirths.— There were no stillbirths during the year, making a stillbirth rate of 0 per 1,000 total live and stillbirths compared with a rate of 0 in 1954.

Deaths—54 deaths (29 males and 25 females) were registered during the year. The death rate at 11.4 per 1,000 compared with a death rate of 12.4 per 1,000 in 1954.

Infantile Mortality.—No deaths of infants under one year of age occurred, compared with 4 in 1954.

The infantile mortality rate was 0 compared with a rate of 45 per 1,000 in 1954.

Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years of age	0
Maternal Mortality	0
Deaths from Tuberculosis, all ages	0
Deaths from Tuberculosis of the Respiratory System	0
Deaths from Cancer	6

CAUSES OF DEATH

The table below shows the causes of death of Urban District residents in 1955:—

Cause of Death	M		F		T
Syphilitic Disease	0	...	1	...	1
Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases	1	...	0	...	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	0	...	2	...	2
Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms ...	2	...	2	...	4
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	4	...	3	...	7
Coronary Disease, Angina	9	...	3	...	12
Other Heart Disease	3	...	3	...	6
Other Circulatory Disease	2	...	2	...	4
Pneumonia	1	...	0	...	1
Bronchitis	1	...	0	...	1
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	1	...	1	...	2
Hyperplasia of Prostate	1	...	0	...	1
Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases	1	...	8	...	9
Motor Vehicle Accidents	2	...	0	...	2
All Other Accidents	1	...	0	...	1
	—		—		—
	29	...	25	...	54
	—		—		—

The table below shows the comparisons between birth and death rates in England and Wales and this district for the past five years:

	England and Wales				Kirkham Urban District			
Year		Births		Deaths		Births		Deaths
1951	15.5	...	12.5	...	14.9	...	14.2
1952	15.3	...	11.3	...	18.1	...	13.6
1953	15.5	...	11.4	...	15.1	...	12.5
1954	15.2	...	11.3	...	18.1	...	12.4
1955	15.0	...	11.7	...	11.8	...	11.4

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES

Personnel:—

Medical Officer of Health:

A. DODD, M.D., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

C. ROBERTSON WILSON, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. (Edin.)
(from May, 1955).

Other appointments held: Medical Officer of Health Borough of Lytham St. Annes, Urban Districts of Poulton-le-Fylde and Preesall, and Fylde Rural District, Divisional Medical Officer of Health, Health Division No. 3, Lancashire County Council.

Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector:

E. RIDDIOUGH, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A., A.M.I.San.E., L.I.O.B.

Hospital Facilities.—For general cases the main hospitals used are the Preston Royal Infirmary of the Preston and Chorley Hospital Management Committee and the Blackpool Victoria, Wesham Park and Lytham St. Annes Hospitals of the Blackpool and Fylde Hospital Management Committee. Infectious diseases cases are admitted to the Devonshire Road Hospital, Blackpool, excepting in the case of Tuberculosis and Smallpox. Main provision for cases of Tuberculosis is at Elswick Sanatorium. Accommodation for Smallpox is provided by the Manchester Regional Hospital Board at the Ainsworth Smallpox Hospital, near Bury.

Ambulance Facilities.—The Ambulance Service is administered by the Lancashire County Council. The needs of the district are met by vehicles from the Wesham Ambulance Station.

Laboratory Facilities.—Bacteriological examinations of specimens are carried out in laboratories at Blackpool Victoria Hospital and Preston Royal Infirmary. The latter laboratory is also used for the examination of water and milk samples.

Professional Nursing in the Home.—General nursing cases and confinements are attended by District Nurses and Midwives of the Lancashire County Council.

Venereal Disease Service.—Facilities for treatment of Venereal Disease are available at Blackpool Victoria Hospital and Preston Royal Infirmary.

School Medical and Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics.—A County Council Clinic is located in Mellor Road and sessions held, at the time of preparation of this report, are as follows:—

Monday ... a.m. Minor Ailments Clinic.

Tuesday ... p.m. Ante-Natal (alternate Tuesdays).

Thursday... a.m. Immunisation (third Thursday in each month).
a.m. Minor Ailments.
a.m. Vaccination (third Thursday in each month).
p.m. Child Welfare Clinic.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The following table shows the numbers of diseases other than tuberculosis notified during the year 1955.

DISEASES.	CASES NOTIFIED.											HOSPITAL.		
	Total Cases at all ages	Under 1 year.	1—	3—	5—	10—	15—	25—	45—	65 and over.	Age unknown.	Total Deaths.	Total Cases rem'd to Hospital.	Deaths in Hospital of Persons belonging to District.
Smallpox														
Scarlet Fever	37	..	2	14	18	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	30	..
Diphtheria and Membranous Group														
Enteric Fever (inc. Paratyphoid)														
Acute Primary Pneumonia ..	3	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	1	1	..	..
Acute Influenzal Pneumonia ..														
Puerperal Fever														
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..
Cerebro-Spinal Fever														
Acute Poliomyelitis	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Acute Polio-encephalitis														
Encephalitis Lethargica														
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ...														
Dysentery	33	..	7	6	10	1	..	6	2	1	..	..
Erysipelas														
Malaria contracted abroad ..														
Do. In this country ..														
Any other diseases notifiable in district; e.g., Chickenpox ..														
Measles and German Measles	86	1	15	25	43	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Whooping Cough	7	1	2	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Any other disease														
Food Poisoning														
Gastro Enteritis	4	..	3	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Totals	173	2	29	48	74	4	5	6	2	1	2	1	30	0

TUBERCULOSIS

A tuberculosis service is provided in its various aspects by the Regional Hospital Board, the Lancashire County Council and District Councils. The Hospital Board is responsible mainly for treatment, the County Council for prevention, care and after care, and the Sanitary Authority also for prevention. A Tuberculosis Health Visitor is provided by the Lancashire County Council and the Hospital and Chest Clinic facilities by the Blackpool and Fylde Hospital Management Committee.

New Cases and Mortality During 1955.

Age Periods		—New Cases—				—Deaths—			
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
		Non-Pulmon'y		Non-Pulmon'y		Non-Pulmon'y		Non-Pulmon'y	
0— 1	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1— 5	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5—10	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
10—15	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
15—20	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
20—25	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
25—35	.....	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
35—45	.....	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
45—55	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
55—65	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
65 and upwards	.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals	.....	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
		1		1		0		0	

In 1954 there were 3 new cases notified, and 2 deaths reported from the disease.

To the Chairman and Members of the Kirkham Urban District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you my fourth annual report on the work done in the Public Health Department during 1955.

During the year some progress has been made in the case of food shops, but a great deal requires to be done. A Housing Survey showed that much work is required in order to improve housing conditions and in particular to bring houses up to a modern standard. Slaughtering within the area has not shown any great difficulties with the exception of the time required to be spent on this work. Routine inspections still suffer as there never seems to be any time to devote to this work due to pressure of other work. Generally more and more duties are being thrust on the department by legislation and the Council will have to give serious consideration to the staffing position.

SANITARY CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT

The following are the numbers of closets, ashpits, dustbins, etc.:—

Water Closets	1,560
Waste Water Closets	3
Pail Closets	0
Privy Closets	0
Privy Ashpits	0
Dry Ashpits	0
Dustbins	1,600
Cesspools	0
Septic Tanks	15
Houses not connected directly to sewer	33
Houses on Water Carriage System	1,447
Percentage of Closets on Water Carriage System ...	99.93
Percentage of Houses connected to General Sewage System	97.72

Sewers and Sewerage System.—The sewerage, in conjunction with that from Wesham, runs to tanks at Newton and then into the River Ribble. The sewerage disposal works consist of two detritus tanks, six settling tanks and fourteen sludge beds. These were constructed in 1941.

The responsibility for the main sewer and sewerage works is held by the Kirkham and Wesham Joint Sewage Committee.

Fifty-eight new houses were connected to the sewerage system during the year.

Rivers and Streams.—One main stream—Wrongway Brook—runs through the district, entering from the Fylde Rural District in a culvert under the railway and discharging into Carr Brook and finally to Dow Brook. This stream forms a portion of the Urban District boundary on the easterly side of the town and provides most of the natural drainage for the district.

A second stream, commencing at the Bye-Pass end of Orders Lane, runs down Orders Lane, under Poulton Street and Mill Street in a brick culvert, and discharges into Carr Brook at the north-easterly corner of the Flax Mill land.

Water Supply.—Water is supplied by the Fylde Water Board and is derived from upland surface sources at Grizedale and Higher Hodder. The water supply is of good quality and is adequate in quantity. All houses have supplies available from this source and all have piped supplies available within the house, none being supplied by stand pipes. No complaints were received concerning the water supply.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT

Summary of Complaints Received.—226 complaints were received during the year, of which many were from Council houses for repairs requiring attention. 1,728 visits were made to premises in connection with this work. 226 nuisances were discovered, of which 219 were abated, leaving 6 to carry forward to 1956. 28 informal notices were served during the year, whilst the number of statutory notices served after reports being made to the Committee was 5. No legal proceedings were taken during the year. In the main most complaints were dealt with after consultation with the landlord concerned. In spite of the high cost of maintenance and low rentals, property is reasonably well maintained. In most cases the tenants are reasonable and do most internal repairs themselves. Advantage is being taken to improve old property under the Housing Repairs and Rents Act. The number of defects found and remedied were as follows:—

Defect	Private Properties	Council Properties
"Siesta" Firebars renewed	—	85
"Siesta" Mica renewed	—	1
"Siesta" Bricks renewed	—	14
"Sofono" Bricks renewed	—	46
"Sofono" Grates renewed	—	20
"Eagle Sutton" Grates renewed	—	7
"Eagle Sutton" Bricks renewed	—	2
"Eagle Sutton" Bars renewed	—	5
"Clayco" Grates renewed	—	3
Firebacks rebuilt	—	3
Fireplace Throating altered	—	1
Fireback Boilers renewed	—	2
Chimney Pot scraped	—	1

Defect	Private Properties	Council Properties
Gas Poker Points provided	—	1
Gas Leaks repaired	—	9
Gas Points removed	—	6
New Gas Fire Radiants supplied	—	2
New Gas Boiler Taps supplied	—	4
Gas Boiler Lids renewed	—	1
Gas Boilers refixed	—	1
Ceiling Roses repaired or renewed	—	2
Electric Plugs repaired or renewed	—	20
Electric Light Switches repaired or renewed	—	17
Immersion Heater Fault repaired	—	1
Electric Light Cords renewed	—	2
W.C. Rag Joint made good	—	1
New Brass Sink Traps fitted	—	25
Burst Pipes repaired	2	6
Air-bound Water Systems repaired	—	4
Ball Taps repaired or renewed	—	27
Defective Drains repaired	—	2
Lead gutters repaired or renewed	—	5
W.C. Syphons repaired or renewed	—	2
Lead Flashing repaired	—	1
Sink Waste Pipes unstopped or repaired ...	—	7
Taps re-washed	—	3
Rain Water Pipe Offset refixed	—	1
Pipes thawed out	—	1
Soil Pipe Joints repaired	—	5
New W.C. Pedestal fixed	—	3
New W.C. Hinges fixed	—	1
W.C. Levers repaired	1	1
New W.C. Flush Pipe Joint fitted	—	1
New W.C. Cone Joints Fitted	—	3
Lavatory Basins repaired and made secure .	—	4
W.C. Seat Rings renewed	—	2
Defective Overflows repaired	—	2
Cisterns repaired	—	1
Overflow Pipe extended	—	1
W.C. Outlet Joint repaired	—	1
Gutters unstopped	—	1
New W.C. Seat fitted	—	1
New Fixture Tiles supplied	—	26
Window Head made weatherproof	—	1
Roof Tiles replaced	—	6
Walls re-plastered	—	7
Air Bricks fitted	—	9
Tile Floor repaired	—	1
Window Frames mastic pointed	—	2
Roof repaired	1	1
Paths made good	—	2
Manhole cover raised	—	1
Mantelshelf refixed	—	1
Woodwork of Floors repaired	—	6
Handrails secured	—	6
Doors refitted	—	11
Quadrant Beads fitted	—	2
Skylights repaired	—	1
Hardboard Panels fitted to doors	—	2
Door Locks repaired or renewed	—	13
Window Frames repaired or renewed	—	7
Drainers renewed	—	2
Window Fastener refixed	—	1

Defect	Private Properties	Council Properties
Skirting renewed	—	1
Garden Gate refitted	—	1
Door Latches repaired	—	5
Door Frames repaired	1	3
Weatherboards fitted	—	3
Thresholds fitted	—	2
New Dustbins supplied	14	5
Walls pointed	1	—
New Sink Waste fitted	1	—
Choked Drain cleared	1	—
New Gully fixed	1	—
New Rain Water Pipe fixed	1	—

DISINFESTATIONS

Three houses were disinfested for fleas and bugs. All three were Council houses. Free issues of insect powder are available to the public.

DISINFECTION AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Thirty-nine houses were visited for investigation in connection with infectious diseases and instructions were given and disinfectant supplied to the householders for disinfecting their premises. There was no other demand for disinfection of premises. Library books were collected from houses where infectious diseases occurred and were disinfected before return to the Library.

SCHOOLS

The schools were inspected on occasion and were satisfactory apart from minor repairs. All are supplied with water by the Fylde Water Board and all have water closets connected to the sewer. Under an agreement between the Council and the County Education Committee I continued to act as Technical Officer for the Committee for schools in the district. This is a good scheme, as it enables small matters to be dealt with at once without having some other person responsible.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES, ETC.

There are no common lodging houses, offensive trades, tents or sheds within the district. Three applications were received during the year for permission to station caravans within the district. In each case the Council refused permission. It would appear that the use of one Site is not being confined to Holiday Periods by members of the Caravan Club as it should be to qualify

for exemption. The Owner was asked to make application under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947. This he did, and at the end of the year the application was awaiting consideration by the Council.

OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH MATTERS

During the year two applications from persons to be registered as Dealers in Old Metals under Section 86 of the Public Health Act Amendment Act, 1907, were approved.

New certificates in respect of means of escape in case of fire were issued to a factory.

No complaints of smoke nuisance were received. There are seven factory chimneys in the town.

During the early part of the year there was an outbreak of Dysentery, which necessitated the taking of 395 faecal samples from 105 persons. This outbreak was not traced to any one source and many cases notified were not proved positive but several of the cases were in large families and in some cases were most persistent before being finally cleared.

HOUSE AND TRADE REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

The Council carried out all refuse collection and disposal. A 7 cubic yard Bedford Refuse Lorry was engaged regularly on this work and salvage was collected by the Tractor. Collections varied but on the average were about every 10 days. The tractor continued to prove its worth and has proved a most economical piece of equipment. Although the Bedford Lorry is working to capacity it is insufficient for the work which continues to increase through the building of new houses. The Council have now shown appreciation of the position and an order has been placed for a specialist-built vehicle for this work. It is hoped that it will be delivered early in 1956 and should bring about an improvement in the service.

Disposal has continued to be carried out at Carr Lane Tip.

A large quantity of soil and top cover was obtained from excavations being made at a new factory in the adjoining district, and this proved most helpful in covering the surface. A portion of re-claimed tip was let to a local farmer.

The collection of salvage was maintained and the bonus scheme for the men continued. The total income during the year was £1,591, being £1,175 from the sale of salvage and £416 from the R.A.F. for an extra weekly collection. The tonnage salvaged was as follows:—

	Tons	Cwts.	Qrs.
Waste Paper (all grades)	96 ...	3 ...	2
Rags	13 ...	17 ...	2
Food Tins	24 ...	7 ...	3
Cast Iron, Scrap, Mixed Metals, etc	5 ...	17 ...	1
	140 ...	6 ...	0

All waste paper is despatched to Thames Board Mills Ltd. under a contract with the Council. During the year the Council enabled the workmen to accept an invitation to visit the works of Messrs. Thames Board Mills Ltd. at Warrington. The visit was most instructive in showing what happens to the paper which the men collect. It is felt that the increase in paper collections was in some measure due to the impression made by this visit.

The total cost of refuse collection and disposal was £2,954, equal to a 1/10d. rate.

FOOD AND DRUGS ADMINISTRATION

Visits were made to premises where foodstuffs were handled or sold.

One large informal notice for improvements was served on the owner of a bakehouse but was not proceeded with as the premises were closed.

The number of visits made to food premises during the year, including the slaughterhouse, was 113. The Food Factory against which the Council took legal proceedings in 1952 was again the subject of proceedings this year. The summonses were: The windows were not in a proper state of repair; the windows were not kept clean; that refuse was allowed to accumulate on the factory floor more than was necessary; that utensils were left in a dirty condition after use; and that a sufficient supply of hot water was not available. The defendant pleaded guilty and was fined on all five charges. Further regular visits were made to this factory, and by the end of the year there was a marked improvement.

The following items of food were inspected, found unfit and surrendered by shopkeepers for destruction.

4 tins Minced Beef Loaf	5 tins Corned Beef
4 tins Peas	8 tins Tomatoes
4 tins Pork Luncheon Meat	1 tin Peeled Shrimps
1 tin Pork Lunch Tongue	1 Boiled Ham
1 tin Salmon	2 tins Pineapples
3 tins Minced Beef Loaf	1 tin Beef and Vegetables
21lbs. Spray Separated Powder	4 tins Milk
2 tins Ox Tongue	

One slaughterhouse is in operation in the district. All meat is inspected and the premises are satisfactory. The owners of this slaughterhouse have been most co-operative and improvements are being made from time to time.

Carcases inspected and condemned were as follows:

	Cattle excluding Cows cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	229	28	34	869	2
Number inspected	229	28	34	869	2
All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci :					
Whole carcases condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	108	—	—	1	—
Percentage of the number in- spected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis and Cysticerci	47.16	—	—	0.12	—
Tuberculosis only:					
Whole carcases condemned	1	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	15	2	—	—	—
Percentage of number inspected affected with Tuberculosis ...	6.99	7.14	—	—	—
Cysticercosis :					
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	1	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treat- ment by refrigeration	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—

The total weight of meat condemned (including offal) was 1,876lbs.

Milk Supply and Distribution.—There is one large dairy and pasteurising plant in the town supplying milk to the surrounding districts. The supervision of this plant is done by the Lancashire County Council. The number of registered dealers is as follows:

Licensed to sell Pasteurised Milk	9
Licensed to sell Tuberculin Tested Milk Pasteurised	8
Licensed to sell Sterilised Milk	3
Licensed to sell Tuberculin Tested Milk Farm Bottled	8

No complaints were received in regard to the milk supply. Only “specially designated” milk (that is, pasteurised, sterilised or tuberculin tested milk) can now be sold in Kirkham under the provisions of The Milk (Special Designations) (Specified Areas) (No. 2) Order, 1955, which came into force on the 6th December, 1955.

Ice Cream.—Two premises are registered for the manufacture of ice cream. These have been inspected and always found to be well run and maintained. Twenty-three dealers are registered for the sale and storage of ice cream. The general standard of vehicles and equipment is high. No complaints were received in regard to ice cream.

Made-up Foods, Potted Meats, etc.—Four premises are registered to manufacture made-up meat products. A good standard of cleanliness was maintained.

Food Sampling by the County Council.—Thirty-three samples were taken by County Inspectors during the year, comprising:—

27 Milk (including 1 Channel Islands Milk)	1 Rose Hip Syrup
2 Cheese	1 Compound Codeine Tablet
1 Raspberry Vinegar and Olive Oil	1 Margarine

All the samples were reported by the County Analyst to be genuine.

SHOPS AND OFFICES

Forty-four visits were made in connection with the Shops Acts.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937

(1) INSPECTIONS FOR PURPOSES OF PROVISIONS AS TO HEALTH INCLUDING INSPECTIONS MADE BY SANITARY INSPECTOR.

Premises	Number of		
	Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
Factories with Mechanical power ...	13	—	—
Factories without Mechanical power	—	—	—
Other premises under the Act (including Building and Engineering construction, but not including outworkers' premises)	—	—	—
Total	13	—	—

(2) DEFECTS FOUND.

PARTICULARS.	Number of Defects.			Number of Defects in respect of which Prosecutions were Instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred by H.M. Inspector	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Want of Cleanliness (S.1)	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2)	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3) ...	—	—	—	—
Inadequate Ventilation (S.4)	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6) .	—	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences (S.7):—				
Insufficient	—	—	—	—
Unsuitable or defective	—	—	—	—
Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—
Other Offences	3	3	—	—
Total	3	3	—	—

RAG-FLOCK AND OTHER FILLING MATERIALS ACT, 1951

Two premises are registered under the above Act. Four inspections were made of them during the year. No samples were taken. The amount of this material used is very small.

RODENT CONTROL

Fifteen complaints of rodent infestations were received. These were investigated and treated by the Rodent Operator. This man has had Ministry training in modern methods and has had much success. The standard Ministry methods are used. The sewers were treated twice and twenty-six takes recorded. The amount of sewer infestation appears to be small.

PETROLEUM ACTS

Sixteen premises are licensed to store petroleum. In every case the petroleum is stored in underground tanks. The total storage capacity is 20,580 gallons. No notices were served under these Acts.

HOUSING

Number of houses on Rate Books	1,448
Number of new houses erected during the year:—	
(a) By the Local Authority	41
(b) By other bodies or persons	17
Number of houses demolished during the year	6
Number of persons displaced	25
Number of Improvement Grant applications received during the year	8
Number of houses in which Improvement Works were completed during the year	4

Demolition Orders were sealed by the Council during the year in respect of a further six houses. The work of demolition had not been started at the end of the year, as the Council were not in a position to rehouse the tenants.

Housing Conditions.—The general housing conditions are fair, the houses being mostly small to medium sized of both parlour and non-parlour type. There is a considerable proportion of old property in the district requiring demolition or improvement when accommodation is available. A few people have taken advantage of the facilities offered by the Council to improve property by means of an Improvement Grant. Although many of the old

houses are of poor external appearance, they are mainly well kept and the internal condition is good. In the main tenants show great pride in their houses.

It is difficult to estimate the demand for houses as conditions are constantly changing, but it is estimated that some 120 are still required, over 50% of which should be of the three-bedroom type with a few four-bedroom and the remainder two-bedroom.

The Council should seriously consider some types suitable for old persons in any future programme.

During the year a contract was let for a further three houses to complete the Freckleton Street Estate. The shortage of building land in the town is affecting both the Council and private builders. The Council have had valued certain small plots suitable for infilling with a view to purchase.

During the year a Housing Survey was carried out and 89 houses were listed as unfit and for dealing with in the next 15 years. Of these it is intended to deal with 46 within 5 years and a further 31 within 10 years.

In carrying out the survey it was felt that many houses were suitable for improvement and that owner/occupiers and landlords should take more advantage of the Improvement Grants. The percentage applying in relation to the number requiring improvement has been small even though the ones improved have proved to be worthwhile. The types improved are, on completion, all that most people desire and are still let at a reasonable figure. The actual costs are relatively high, varying between £200 and £450. If owners would realise that if they do not invest in their properties they will eventually depreciate further and thus even more may be subject to demolition orders than the number already agreed upon. All the advertising of the scheme does not produce anything like the same response as personal interviews with the owners, giving them a rough idea of what is required, approximate costs, etc. Much work requires to be done on these lines, but with our present staff it is just not possible. The time taken on each application for grant is considerable — the owner has to be seen, plans and specifications checked, a full report has to be made to the Committee, and the work checked on completion. Many queries are dealt with and many prospective applications are not proceeded with.

The Council have continued to give every opportunity to prospective buyers by operating the Small Dwellings Acquisition Acts and by standing as guarantors for persons buying through Building Societies.

STAFF

As previously mentioned, the question of additional staff requires further consideration by the Council. No foreman is employed and a good proportion of time is spent in dealing with workmen, measuring for and ordering materials for the Surveyor's side of the work, etc.

My thanks are again expressed for the efficient service rendered by Mr. N. Swift, the Clerk in the Department, and for the excellent and willing co-operation from other members of the staff and workmen.

I remain,

Your obedient servant,

E. RIDDIOUGH.

